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Message Text

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EXDIS - MILITARY ADDEES HANDLE AS SPECAT EXCLUSIVE

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DEPARTMENT PLEASE PASS SECDEF, USNMR SHAPE AND USDOCOSOUTH

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, NATO, FR
SUBJECT: FRANCE AND NATO

REF: STATE 34957 DTG 160044Z FEB 77

SUMMARY: RECENTLY, THE EDGE OF FRENCH POLICY TOWARD NATO HAS
HARDENED, LEADING SYG LUNS AND SOME PERMREPS TO
CONCLUDE THAT FRANCE HAS SET A NEW COURSE DESIGNED TO
HAMSTRING POLITICAL CONSULTATIONS IN NAT AND THUS WEAKEN
THE ORGANIZATION, WITH SERIOUS IMPLICATIONS FOR ITS FUTURE.
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SOME SEE ALSO AN EFFORT BY FRANCE TO STRENGTHEN EC
NINE POLITICAL CONSULTATIONS AT THE EXPENSE OF NATO
AND TO DIMINISH THE US ROLE IN EUROPE. WE
DO NOT SUBSCRIBE TO THIS EXTREME VIEW OF CURRENT FRENCH
POLICY IN NATO, AND WE FIND THAT POLICY CONSISTENT WITH POST-WAR
FRENCH ATTEMPTS TO ADVANCE ALSO IN NATO FRANCE'S
ASPIRATIONS TO A WORLD ROLE AND DOMINANT POSI-
TION IN WESTERN EUROPE.

MORE STUBBORNLY COMMITTED THAN OTHER ALLIES TO

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NATIONAL OBJECTIVES NARROWLY DEFINED, EVEN AT THE EXPENSE OF COLLECTIVITIES, SUCH AS NATO, DESIGNED TO SERVE COMMON PURPOSES, THE FRENCH APPEAR INTENT ON (A) ASSERTING RESTRAINTS ON NATO CONSULTATIONS THAT, OVER RECENT YEARS, EXPANDED IN A FASHION VIEWED FROM PARIS AS INCONSISTENT WITH NATO'S APPROPRIATE ROLE, WHILE (B) INSURING FRENCH SECURITY AND DERIVING MILITARY BENEFITS THROUGH THE ALLIANCE.

FRENCH OBJECTIVES TOWARD NATO ARE THUS DIFFERENT FROM AND PARTLY ADVERSE TO OUR OWN, AND THE TACTICS OF THE FRENCH NATO DELEGATION, WHILE CLUMSY, REFLECT AIMS THAT ARE LIKELY TO CONTINUE TO POSE PROBLEMS FOR THE US.

WE SEE CAUSE FOR CONCERN IN THE LONGER-RANGE IMPLICATIONS OF FRENCH ACTIONS, AND SUGGEST, AT THE CONCLUSION OF THIS MESSAGE,STEPS THE US MIGHT TAKE TO DEAL WITH THEM: (A) AD HOC EFFORTS TO MEET FRENCH CONCERNS; (B) NARROWING NATO CONSULTATIONS IN LINE WITH FRENCH PREFERENCES; OR (C) MAKING CLEAR TO THE FRENCH AT HIGH-LEVEL THE IMPORTANCE THE US ATTAHHES TO EFFECTIVE NAT POLITICAL CONSULTATIONS IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN US AND ALLIED PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR THE ALLIANCE, TO WHICH THE US ATTACHES CENTRAL IMPORTANCE.

SECRET

OUR ANALYSIS OF FRENCH OBJECTIVES AND TACTICS TOWARD NATO , WHICH FOLLOWS, NECESSARILY INCLUDES JUDGMENTS ABOUT FRENCH NATIONAL POLICIES WHICH OTHERS MAY BE MORE COMPTTENT THAN WE TO DERIVE. NONETHELESS, FRENCH POLICIES TOWARD NATO NATURALLY FLOW FROM POLICY LINES FORMULATED IN PARIS AND CAN ONLY BE DISCUSSED IN THOSE TERMS. END SUMMARY.

I. FOREIGN POLICY OBJECTIVES AND TACTICS

1. FUNDAMENTAL FRENCH FOREIGN POLICY OBJECTIVES APPEAR TO HAVE CHANGED LITTLE SINCE WORLD WAR II AND FRENCH ACTIVITIES IN NATO OVER RECENT YEARS REFLECT THIS STEADFASTNESS OF PURPOSE.

2. TO PLAY A MAJOR POWER ROLE HAS BEEN A CENTRAL OBJECTIVE OF FRANCE SINCE DE GAULLE VAINLY TRIED TO PERSUADE ROOSEVELT TO INCLUDE FRANCE WITH GREAT BRITAIN AMONG THE THREE GREAT WESTERN POWERS. MOREOVER, AFTER EISENHOWER REBUFFED DE GAULLE'S 1958 PROPOSAL FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A "WORLD DIRECTORATE," DE GAULLE SOUGHT FOR FRANCE, IN OTHR WAYS, SOME MEASURE OF THE STATUS THAT MEMBERSHIP IN A "DIRECTORATE" WOULD HAVE GIVEN HIM. ASSERTING FRENCH PURPOSES

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INDEPENDENTLY OF FRANCE'S WESTERN PARTNERS AND SEARCHING
FOR PRIVILEGED FRENCH POSITION AS INTERLOCU-
TOR BETWEEN EAST AND WEST AND WITH THE THIRD WORLD,
DE GAULLE AND HIS SUCCESSORS HAVE USED THE MANEUVER
ROOM ON THE WORLD STAGE AFFORDED BY THE US-SOVIET
NUCLEAR STANDOFF TO ENHANCE FRANCE'S INFLUENCE ON
WORLD EVENTS.

3. ANCILLARY TO FRANCE'S GREAT POWER ASPIRATIONS
IS ITS DESIRE TO PLAY A LEADING ROLE IN EUROPE. FOR
A TIME, DE GAULLE APPEARED TO ENVISAGE FRENCH ASCENDENCY
IN A "EUROPE OF STATES," AND THUS BLOCKED MOVEMENT
SECRET

TOWARD EUROPEAN INTEGRATION,DECLARING IN 1963 THAT
HE HAD NO DESIRE TO SEE FRANCE
"DISSOLVE" IN A COMMON EUROPE. HOWEVER, BY 1969, WITH
FRENCH ACQUIESCENCE, THE ROAD TO WESTERN EUROPEAN UNI-
FICATION ONCE AGAIN WAS OPENED, AND, MORE RECENTLY,
FRANCE HAS ADDED ITS SUPPORT TO EFFORTS TOWARD ECONOMIC AND
MONETARY UNION, THE EMERGENCE OF A EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT
AND ENHANCEMENT OF POLITICAL CONSULTATIONS AMONG THE
EC NINE.

4. WHILE FRANCE DOES NOT DOMINATE THE NINE, HER
WEIGHT IS GREATER THAN THAT OF ANY AMONG HER PARTNERS. MOREOVER,
SINCE NINE DECISIONS ARE TAKEN LARGELY BY CONSENSUS, FRANCE
REMAINS IN A POSITION TO VETO ACTIONS CUTTING ACROSS
FRENCH INTERESTS. IT ALSO WOULD BE CONSISTENT WITH
PAST POLICY FOR FRANCE TO CONTINUE TO PURSUE THE
GOAL OF A EUROPEAN COMMUNITY THAT, BY ITS
COLLECTIVE WEIGHT, ADDS TO FRANCE'S CLOUT. WHILE WE DO NOT EXPECT
THAT FRANCE SOON WILL BE THE STRONGEST ADVOCATE OF
EUROPEAN UNIFICATION, AND MUCH IN THIS REGARD ALSO
WILL DEPEND ON THE FRENCH DOMESTIC POLITICAL SITUATION,
WE WOULD EXPECT FRANCE, FOR REASONS RELATED TO ITS
BASIC FOREIGN POLICY OBJECTIVES, TO TOLERATE THE EVO-
LUTION OF AN EC THAT MEETS FRANCE'S PRESCRIPTION.
THIS HAS IMPLICATIONS, OF COURSE, NOT ONLY FOR THE EC,
BUT FOR OTHER WESTERN INSTITUTIONS, LIKE NATO.

5. IN LINE WITH ITS WORLDWIDE AND EUROPEAN ASPIRA-
TIONS, THE FRENCH ALSO HAVE CONSISTENTLY SOUGHT TO
ESTABLISH A RELATIONSHIP WITH THE UNITED STTES WHICH
WOULD GIVE IT A PRIVILEGED POSITION. SUCCESSIVE US
ADMINISTRATIONS HAVE MET THAT INTEREST IN VARYING
DEGREES, THOUGH FRANCE'S OWN CONCERNS ABOUT AMERICAN
DOMINANCE IN WESTERN EUROPE'S AFFAIRS HAVE CONTRIBUTED
TO FREQUENT TURBULENCE IN US-FRENCH RELATIONS. NONE-
THELESS, FRANCE'S IMPORTANCE HAS ALWAYS ASSURED IT A
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CAREFUL HEARING, DESPITE DISAGREEMENTS, WE ALWAYS
HAVE--AND FOR GOOD REASONS--COUNTED FRANCE AMONG
OUR CLOSEST ALLIES. STILL, IN US EYES FRANCE HAS
NEVER ACHIEVED THE PRIVILEGED STATUS OF THE UK, AND
THE EMERGENCE OF INCREASINGLYCLOSE US-FRG TIES
DOUBTLESS HAS TROUBLED FRANCE AS IT HAS GIVEN CONCERN
TO OTHR ALLIES, INCLUDING THE FRG ITSELF. THE STATE
OF BILATERAL RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE MAJOR PARTNERS
ALSO IMPACTS, OF COURSE, ON NATO.

6. FINALLY, FRANCE'S LASTING CONCERN ABOUT THE FRG
AS A POTENTIAL THREAT TO EUROPEAN STABILITY AND FRANCE HERSELF
HAS BEEN AN IMPORTANT FACTOR INFRENCH POLICY. EFFORTS BY FRANCE
TO CO-OPT THE FRG IN PURSUIT OF FRENCH PURPOSES THUS DOUBTLESS WILL
CONTINUE.

II. MILITARY OBJECTIVES AND TACTICS

7. THE FRENCH, LIKE ALL ALLIES, SEE NO PRESENT ALTERNA-
TIGE TO NATO AND TO THE US COMMITMENT TO EUROPE'S DEFENSE.
DE GAULLE'S OWN AWARENESS OF NATO'S CENTRALITY TO EFFEC-
TIVE DETERRENCE AND DEFENSE WAS SHOWN WHEN, IN TAKING
FRANCE LARGELY OUT OF NATO'S INTEGRATED MILITARY
ORGANIZATION, HE CAREFULLY AVOIDED DAMAGING NATO'S BASIC
INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURE.

8. BUT THE DENIAL OF PEACETIME ALLIED MILITARY OPERA-
TIONS ON FRENCH TERRITORY HAS BEEN A HANDICAP IN FORGING
AN EFFECTIVE NATO READINESS POSTURE. A CASE ALSO CAN BE
MADE THAT FRANCE'S OWN MILITARY POSTURE HAS BEEN
ADVERSELY AFFECTED BY ITS RELATIVE ISOLATION.
INDEED, PROBLEMS ARISING FROM FRANCE'S POLICY OF
NON-COOPERATION PROBABLY HAVE, SINCE 1966, GRADUALLY
FORCED FRANCE TO MOVE CLOSER TO HER ALLIES
IN THE MILITARY SPHERE.

9. THE REASONS FOR GISCARD'S WILLINGNESS TO GRANT
APPROVAL FOR FRANCE-NATO MILITARY COOPERATION ON THE
PRESENT SCALE MAY BE THAT, IN ADDITION TO RECOGNIZING
THE NEED TO STRENGTHEN FRANCE'S MILITARY POSTURE BY
MAKING IT EASIER FOR FRENCH FORCES TO WORK WITH OTHER
ALLIED FORCES IN THE EVENT OF EMERGENCY, FRENCH
POLITICAL LEADERSHIP HAS HAD TO MEET THE DISSATISFACTION
OF ELEMENTS OF THE FRENCH MILITARY OVER FRANCE'S
DISTANCE FROM ITS PARTNERS. FRENCH CHIEF OF STAFF
GENERAL MERY'S RECENT ASSERTION OF THE IMPORTANCE OF
FORWARD DEFENSE - PARALLELING IN THAT RESPECT THE
STRATEGY OF FRANCE'S ALLIES--PROVIDES CONFIRMATION

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OF A LIKELY EFFORT, WITHIN GALLIC LIMITS, TO BEGIN TO
MEET REALISTIC MILITARY CONCERNS AND HENCE PERHAPS
PLACATE THE IMPORTANT MILITARY ELEMENT OF THE FRENCH
POLICY.
POSSESSION OF ITS "FORCE DE FRAPPE" PROVIDES FRANCE
WITH AN INDEPENDENT DETERRENT AND OTHER PERQUISITES
OF MEMBERSHIP IN THE WORLD'S NUCLEAR CLUB, AS WELL AS
INDISPUTABLE MILITARY SUPERIORITY OVER THE FRG.

10. FRANCE ALSO HAS MAINTAINED COMPLETE INDE-
PENDENCE OF ACTION IN THE NUCLEAR ARENA, SINCE ITS FORCES
ARE NOT INTEGRATED IN NATO. THOUGH FRENCH-US COOPERATION
IN TECHNICAL NUCLEAR MATTERS HAS BEEN IMPORTANT TO THE
EVOLUTION OF FRANCE'S NUCLEAR POSTURE, IT HAS NOT LED,
SO FAR AS WE ARE AWARE, TO RENEWED FRENCH MILITARY
COMMITMENTS TO NATO OR TO ANY INCREASED PRESUMPTION OF
WARTIME COOPERATION BEYOND POMPIDOU'S GENERAL ASSERTION
THAT FRANCE, IN TIME OF CRISIS, WOULD BE THE ALLY OF
ITS ALLIES.

11. THE FRENCH HAVE SOUGHT AS WELL TO LEAVE OPEN THE
OPTION FOR EUROPEAN DEFENSE COOPERATION, DOUBTLESS
RECOGNIZING THAT EFFECTIVE EUROPEAN DEFENSE COOPERATION
WILL REQUIRE A HIGHDEGREE OF POLITICAL INTEGRATION;
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BUT THE RESRRVED FRENCH APPROACH TO EUROPEAN POLITICAL
INTEGRATION HAS DIMINISHED EARLY PROSPECTS FOR SIGNI-
FICANTLY IMPROVED EUROPEAN DEFENSE COOPERATION.

III. TACTICS TOWARD NATO

12. PARADOXICALLY FOR AN ALLY THAT LEFT THE INTEGRATED
MILITARY STRUCTURE AND MAINTAINED ITS PARTICIPATION IN
NATO'S POLITICAL FORA, FRANCE IS COOPERATING ON SELECTED
MILITARY ISSUES WHILE OBSTRUCTING POLITICAL CONSULTATIONS.

13. AMONG OTHER MOVES, THE FRENCH HAVE:
WORKED CLOSELY WITH SACEUR, AND, FOR EXAMPLE,
HAVE ENHANCED THEIR PARTICIPATION IN MILITARY EXER-
CISES AND COOPERATED MORE FULLY IN THE DEVELOPMENT
OF CONTINGENCY PLANS. THE RESULT IS THE HIGHEST
DEGREE OF FRENCH MILITARY COOPERATION WITH NATO IN
OVER A DECADE. FRANCE MAINTAINS IN THIS WAY A
PRESENCE IN NATO MILITARY ACTIVITIES THAT ASSURES IT
A STEADY FLOW OF INFORMATION ONALLIANCE MILITARY
PLANNING AND INTELLIGENCE MATERIALS THAT COULD BE
CRUCIAL IN CRISIS.

14. THUS, WITHOUT THE OVERSIGHT BY ALLIES INHERENT
IN PARTICIPATION IN NATO'S INTEGRATED MILITARY
STRUCTURE, FRANCE DERIES THE INFORMATION IT WANTS

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ABOUT ALLIED DEFENSE THROUGH ITS MILITARY OFFICERS
ON THE FRENCH NATO DELEGATION, ITS MISSION TO THE
NATO MILITARY COMMITTEE, ANND ITS LIAISON OFFICERS AT
MAJOR NATO COMMANDS. NAT MILITARY DOCUMENTS ARE
AVAILABLE TO THE FRENCH (EXCEPT SOME INTELLIGENCE AND
NUCLEAR PAPERS).

15. FRANCE DOES NOT PARTICIPATE IN NATO'S NUCLEAR
PLANNING GROUP, WHERE ALLIED VIEWS ARE HARMONIZED
ON NUCLEAR ISSUES. HOWEVER, WE BRIEF THE FRENCH
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PRIVATELY ON KEY NUCLEAR ISSUES DISCUSSED IN THE NPG
OF WHICH WE BELIEVE THE FRENCH SHOULD BE AWARE.

16. FINALLY, ACCEPTED NAT PROCEDURES PERMIT FRANCE
TO REQUEST THAT ANY SUBJECT BEFORE THE DEFENSE
PLANNING COMMITTEE OR SUBORDINATE BODIES IN WHICH
FRANCE IS INTERESTED BE SHIFTED TO THE NAC AND THE
FIFTEEN. THE ADVANTAGES FOR FRANCE INHERENT IN THIS
SITUATION DO NOT STIMULATE FRENCH INTEREST IN OTHER
NATO ACTIVITIES, AND LEAD IT TO ASSUME THAT IT WILL CONTINUE,.
DESPITE ITS SPECIAL POSITION, TO RECEIVE MOST ALLIANCE MILITARY
BENEFITS.

17. THE FRENCH DELEGATION AT NATO HAS SOME TACTICAL
LATITUDE, WE JUDGE, IN REGARD TO ALLIANCE POLITICAL CONSULTATIONS.
A RELATIVELY COOPERATIVE APPROACH WAS OFTEN SHOWN BY FORMER FRENCH
PERMREP DE ROSE, WHO FREQUENTLY STATED FRENCH OBJECTIONS FOR THE
RECORD, BUT RARELY BLOCKED CONSULTATIONS. AMBASSADOR TINE'S
DIFFERENT APPROACH IS CONSONANT WITH FRENCH OBJECTIVES,
WE BELIEVE, BUT HEWS CONSISTENTLY TO TOUGH, LIMITED INTERPRETATIONS
OF THEM. SINCE TINE'S ARRIVAL, THE FRENCH DELEGATION,
IT SEEMS TO US, HAS BEEN GEARED TO VIGILANCE, AND WE
BELIEVE THAT, IN SOME INSTANCES, IT IS PROMPTING INSTRUC-
TIONS FROM PARIS THAT REINFORCE THIS VIGILANCE.

18. TO UNDERSTAND THE FRENCH AT NATO, HOWEVER, WE
BELIEVE WE SHOULD ABSTRACT POSSIBLE PERSONAL QUIRKS,
AND ADDRESS FRENCH ACTIONS HERE AS REFLECTING FRENCH
OBJECTIVES.

19. IN THE SPHERE OF NATO POLITICAL CONSULTATIONS, THE FRENCH
RECNETLY HAVE:
--CARRIED OUT A CAMPAIGN AGAINST REFINFORCED
CONSULTATIONS IN NAC, EXPECIALLY ON DEVELOPMENTS
OURSIDE EUROPE AND SOME ARMS CONTROL MATTERS IT HAS SUPPORTED SUCH
CONSULTATIONS WHEN FRANCE APPEARED TO HAVE A SPECIFIC INTEREST,
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AS IN THE CASE OF LAW OF THE SEA CONSULTATIONS.
FRANCE HAS REPEATEDLY STRESSED NATO'S VOCATION AS LIMITED TO THE TREATY AREA AND MILITARY CONCERNS, DWSPITE HAVING JOINED IN APPROVAL OF THE 1956 THREE WISE MEN'S REPORT, THE 1967 HARMEL REPORT, AND THE ATLANTIC DECLARATION OF 1974. MEANWHILE, FRANCE HAS SUPPORTED SIMULTANEOUD EXPANSION OF EC NINE POLITICAL CONSULTATIONS, INCLUDING ON EAST-WEST ISSUES OF TRADITIONAL NATO CONCERN, THUS DISENGAGING CONSULTATIONS AMONG THE NINE FROM NATO, WHIEL OBSTRUCTING NATO CONSULTATIONS.

--STAYED GENERALLY ALOOF FROM MBFR WHILE EXPRESSING DISAPPROVAL, BUT RECENTLY OBJECTED SPECIFICALLY TO INCLUSION OF FRENCH FORCES IN MBFR DATA. FRANCE WANTS TO AVOID COMMITMENTS THAT COULD BIND IT IN ANY WAY WITH REGARD TO THE LEVEL OF ITS NUCLEAR OR OTHER FORCES, ESPECIALLY GENERAL PURPOSE FORCES, IN THE FRG. MOREOVER, IF THE FRENCH OBJECTIVE IS EVENTUALLY TO ASSERT WESTERN EUROPEAN PRIMACY IN ITS OWN DEFENSE, IT WOULD BE CONSISTENT FOR FRANCE TO SEEK TO PREVENT A SOVIET "DROIT DE REGARD" THOUGH MBFR, ON THE LEVEL OF WESTERN EUROPEAN NATIONAL FORCES.

--BLOCKED IN THE IEPG A MORE FORTHCOMING APPROACH TO A DIALOGUE IN NAT INCLUDING NON-IEPG ALLIES.
FRANCE, IN SHIFTING US-SPONSORED NATO CONSULTATIONS ON STANDARDIZATION OF ARMAMENTS LARGELY TO THE IEPG, APPRRENTLY WANTS TO STIMULATE EUROPEAN ARMAMENTS COOPERATION AS A MEANS OF WORKING TOWARD EUROPEAN DEFENSE COOPERATION AND ENHANCING FRANCE'S POSITION IN THE ARMAMENTS FIELD.

--SOUGHT TO CURTAIL EXPANSION OF NATO EFFORTS IN THE PUBLIC DOMAIN THAT WOULD TEND TO GIVE PROMINENCE TO NATO AT A TIME WHEN THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT APPEARS TO WANT TO ACDENT THE NINE AND DWONPLAY NATO
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POLITICAL CONSULTATIONS.

20. FINALLY, A SPECIAL FEATURE OF THE RECENT FRENCH PERFORMANCE AT NAT IS A MINIMAL CONTRIBUTION ON SUBSTANCE. FRENCH REPRESENTATIVES FROM PARIS PARTICIPATE IN EXPERTS MEETINGS, AND THE DELEGATION PROVIDES SOME USEFUL CONTRIBUTIONS IN PERMREPS, POLADS AND ECONADS MEETINGS. HOWEVER, THE FRENCH CONTRIBUTION IS NOT COMMENSURATE WITH THE RESOURCES AT PARIS' DISPOSAL. WHEN THE FRENCH TAKE THE FLOOR AT NATO, IT IS FREQUENTLY OTO OBJECT, NOT TO CONTRIBUTE. WE KNOW THAT THE FRENCH ARE STRONG CONTRIBUTORSIN THD NINE CONSULTATIONS, BUT THEY RARELY REPEAT IN NATO THE INSIGHTS WE ARE TOLD THEY EXPOSE TO THE NINE.

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IV. ALLIED VIEWS

21. OUR ALLIES, EXCEPT FOR THE FRENCH, SEE ACTIVE POLITICAL CONSULTATIONS AT NATO AS DIRETLY RELEVANT TO THEIR SECURITY CONCERNS. THEY ALSO SEE NATO CONSULTATIONS AS INDUCING A SHARED APPRECIATION OF THE WORLD IN WHICH THEY OPERATE AS ALLIES, AS HELPING TO BIND THE US TO EUROPE, AND AS A CONTEXT IN WHICH THEY CAN FIND OUT AND INFLUENCE US POLICY.

22. EXCEPT FOR THE FRENCH, THE ALLIES APPEAR TO SEE NO CNFLICT BETWEEN EC CONSULTATIONS AND CONSULTATIONS AT NATO AND, WHIELE THERE MAY BE A CERTAIN BUREAUCRATIC MOMENTUM IN THE GOVERNMENTS OF THE NINE TOWARD EMPHASIZING EC CONSULTATIONS, THIS NEED NOT CONFLICT WITH EFFORTS AT NATO. EXCEPT FOR THE FRENCH, EC DELEGATIONS HERE STRIVE TO ASSURE THAT EC CONSULTATIONS DOVETAIL WITH AND REINFORCE CONSULTATIONS AT NATO. THE FRENCH, HOEVER, AS WE HAVE NOTED, SEEM TO WANT EC CONSULTATIONS TO PROCEED ON A SEPARATE TRACK LARGELY FREE OF US INFLUENCE. THE RECENT FRENCH

INTERPRETATION OF THE GYMNICH FORMULA THAT CALLS FOR CONSULTATIONS ONLY AFTER THE NINE HAVE TAKEN POSITIONS, POINTS IN THIS DIRECTION. TO ACCEPT THI APPROACH WOULD REDUCE OUR ABILITY TO USE THE NATO FORUM FOR ACTIVE US ENGAGEMENT IN DIRECT CONSULTATIONS ON POLITICAL AND SECURITY ISSUES WITH ALL OF OUR EUROPEAN ALLIES AND THE CANADIANS AND TO MAKE OUR INFLUENCE FELT WHILE ALLIED VIEWS ARE STILL DEVLEOPING.

V. THE RESULTS OF FRENCH ACTIONS

23. IN NATO, FRENCH ACTIONS HAVE HAD THE FOLLOWING EFFECTS:
--AN INFLUENTIAL ALLY THAT MAKES MINIMAL CONTRIBUTION TO NATO CONSULTATIONS IS OBSTRUCTING OTHERS THAT WANT TO CONSULT FROM DOING SO AS FREELY AND FULLY AS THEY WOULD LIKE.

--FRENCH TACTICS ADVERSELY AFFECT ALLIED COHESION AND SOLIDARITY. THE GREEKS, AT LEAST, APPEAR TEMPTED TO FOLLOW THE FRENCH EXAMPLE, THUS BROADENING THE PATTERN OF SELECTIVE PARTICIPATION AMONG NATO ALLIES.

--THOSE, LIKE SYG LUNS, WHO AIM TO MAKE NATO FUNCTION EFFECTIVELY ARE CONSTANTLYCHALLENGED IN THEIR ENDEAVORS BY FRENCH POSITIONS AND TACTICS. THEY COULD PERHAPS ACCOMMODATE THE FRENCH ON EACH INDIVIDUAL ISSUE, BUT THEY ARE CONCERNED THAT TO DO SO MAY

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GRADUALLY DEBILITATE THE NATO CONSULTATIGE PROCESS.

--TO THE EXTENT THE FRENCH ARE SUCCESSFUL IN SHIFTING INCREASINGLY
THE FOCUS OF POLITICAL CONSULTATION ON EAST-WEST ISSUES
FROM NATO TO THE EC NINE, THE MORE THE NINE WOULD BE
DISENGAGED FROM NATO, WHICH NONETHELESS IS ESSENTIALLY
TO WESTERN SECURITY, AND THE LESS OPPORTUNITY THE US WILL
HAVE TO INFLUENCE POLICIES OF ALL ALLIES DURING THE
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FORMATIVE STAGE OF THE CONSULTATIVE PROCESS.

--IN SUM, FRENCH ACTIONS, RATHER THAN STRENGTHENING
ALLIANCE COHESION AND SOLIDARITY, SERVE TO DEVILITATE THE
SPRIT OF ALLIANCE COOPERATION ESSENTIAL TO UNDERPINNING
ALLIED DEFENSES AND UNDERCUT THE SENSE OF COMMON PURPOSE WHICH
IS SO ESSENTIAL TO THE EFFECTIGE FUNCTIONING OF THE ALLIANCE
IN ALL SPHERES.

VI. US OPTIONS

24. THERE ARE ESSENTIALLY THREE PATHS WE CAN FOLLOW IN
DEALING WITH THE CURRENHT FRENCH ATTITUDE TOWARDS NATO:

(A) MAINTAIN OUR EFFORTS TO PROMOTE BROAD POLITICAL
CONSULTATIONS, TRYING, WHENEVER POSSIBLE, TO RESOLVE INDIVIDUAL
PROBLEMS ON AN AD HOC BASIS AND TO AVOID POSING TO THE FRENCH
QUESTIONS OF PRINCIPLE OR MANDATE FOR NATO CONSULTATIVE
ACTIVITIES. OTHER DELEGATIONS WILL WELCOME US EFFORTS TO
MAINTAIN THE BREADTH AND MOMENTUM OF CONSULTATIONS AT
NATO, AND IN SOME INSTANCES WE MAY SUCCEED IN EASING
INTO SUCH CONSULTATIONS WITHOUT RAISING FRENCH OBJECTIONS.
HOWEVER, THE "VIGILANCE" OF THE FRENCH DELEGATION MAY
COMPLICATE OUR EFFORTS, AND WE RISK
CONTINUED FRICTION AND THE LIKELIHOOD THAT THE
LIMITS OF CONSULTATIONS WILL BE ESTABLISHED ON
AN AD HOC BASIS BY WHAT THE FRENCH INDICATE THEY
ARE WILLING TO ACCEPT.

(B) NARROW NATO CONSULTATIONS TO SOME DEGREE.
THIS WOULD ENTAIL ATTEMPTING TO DEEPEN CONSULTATIONS
ON EAST-WEST SECURITY ISSUES, WHILE ACCEPTING SOME
OF THE LIMITATIONS THE FRENCH DESIRE ON THE RANGE,
LEVEL AND VISIBILITY OF NATO CONSULTATIONS. THIS
APPROACH WOULD IMPLY RESTRAINT ON WASHINGTON'S PART
IN PROPOSING CONSULTATIONS ON DEVELOPMENTS OUTSIDE
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OF THE TREATY AREA, AS WELL AS NAC MEETINGS WITH
SENIOR OFFICIALS ON KEY SUBJECTS SUCH AS THE UN,

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WHICH HAVE INCREASINGLY RUN INTO FRENCH OBJECTIONS.
THIS APPROACH WOULD REDUCE FRICTION WITH THE
FREHCH BUT IT WOULD, HOWEVER, ALSO REDUCE OUR ABILITY TO CONSULT
DIRECTLY WITH THE OTHER ALLIES AT NATO ON DEVELOP-
MENTS RELEVANT TO ALLIED SECURITY. IT WOULD ALSO DEEPLY
DISAPPOINT OUR EUROPEAN PARTNERS WHO FAVOR STRENGTHENING NATO'S ROLE.

(C) MAKE CLEAR TO THE FRENCH AT A HIGH LEVEL
THE IMPORTANCE THE US ATTACHES TO NATO CONSULAATIONS,
OUR DESIRE NOT TO SEE THEM DISRUPTED, AND OUR
WILLINGNESS TO SEEK PRAGMATIC SOLUTIONS THAT TAKE
FRENCH SENSIBILITIES INTO ACCOUNT. THIS APPROACH
WOULD RECOGNIZE THAT THE BROADER CHALLENGE WE FACE
MAY NOT BE DEALT WITH SUCCESSGULLY SIMPLY BY TRYING
TO RESOLVE DISCRETE PROBLEMS AT NATO OR BY RESTRICT-
ING CONSULTATIONS. IN SUCH A DEMARCHE, WE WOULD
STRESS THAT IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN BROAD US AND ALLIED
PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR NATO'S DEFENSIVE EFFORTS, FROM
WHICH THE FRENCH BENEFIT, NATO MUST BE SEEN AS ACTIVE
NOT ONLY IN THE MILITARY SPHERE, BUT ON BROADER ISSUES
IN THE POLITICAL SPHERE. WE WOULD ALSO STRESS THAT US
RELATIONS WITH THE EC NINE ARE OF THE HIGHEST IMPORTANCE,
BUT THAT NATO, BECAUSE OF ITS BROADER MEMBERSHIP AND
SECURITY PURPOSES, REMAINS CENTRAL TO US FOREIGN POLICY.
AS A CONSEQUENCE OF SUCH AN APPROACH, THE FRENCH
WILL BE SENSITIVE TO THE DEGREE OF WASHINGTON COMMIT-
MENT TO NATO CONSULTATIONS AND WILL BE MORE SUPPLE IF
WASHINGTON IS SEEN TO BE FIRM. AT THE SAME TIME,
OVERALL FRENCH OBJECTIVES ARE UNLIKELY TO CHANGE
HENCE WE WILL HAVE TO EXPEND POLITICAL CAPITAL TO
MAINTAIN THE INTEGRITY OF THE CONSULTATIVE PROCESS AT
NATO. STRAUSZ-HUPE UNQUOTE VANCE

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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 26-Feb-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977STATE043582
Document Source: ADS
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: S/S-O:AWOTTO
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: 11652 GDS
Errors: n/a
Expiration:
Film Number: D770067-0756
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t197702100/baaaevig.tel
Line Count: 522
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, TEXT ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 484f1fbf-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 10
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: STATE 34957 DTG 160044Z FEB 77
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26-Oct-2004 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3234235
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FRANCE AND NATO
TAGS: PFOR, PORG, ECIN, MPOL, FR, US, NATO, EEC
To: USNMR SHAPE USDOCOSOUTH
Type: TE
vdkvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/484f1fbf-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009